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Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations

Information submitted by the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system on their activities with regard to the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations

Report of the President of the Council

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 2017/31, the Economic and Social Council requested the President of the Council to continue to maintain close contact with the Chair of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples on the matters considered in that resolution and to report thereon to the Council.

2. In paragraph 7 of its resolution 72/93, the General Assembly requested the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system and international and regional organizations to examine and review conditions in each Non-Self-Governing Territory, so as to take appropriate measures to accelerate progress in the economic and social sectors of the Territories. In paragraph 21 of the resolution, the Assembly commended the Council for its debate and its resolution on the question and requested the Council to continue to consider and intensify its cooperation with the Special Committee, with the aim of developing appropriate measures for the further coordination of the policies and activities of the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system in implementing the relevant resolutions of the Assembly. The Assembly, in paragraph 12 of its resolution 72/92, encouraged the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system and regional organizations to continue to provide assistance to the Non-Self-Governing Territories affected by the hurricanes and other natural disasters and to formulate appropriate programmes to support emergency response and recovery and rebuilding efforts, and requested the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly on this matter.

3. The following 17 Territories are under the purview of the Special Committee: American Samoa, Anguilla, Bermuda, British Virgin Islands, Cayman Islands, Falkland Islands (Malvinas),[1] French Polynesia, Gibraltar, Guam, Montserrat, New Caledonia, Pitcairn, Saint Helena, Tokelau, Turks and Caicos Islands, United States Virgin Islands and Western Sahara. Information submitted in response to a request to the specialized agencies and the international organizations associated with the United Nations to provide an account of their activities in relation to those Territories is set out below.

II. Support provided to Non-Self-Governing Territories by the specialized agencies and international organizations associated with the United Nations

4. Responses were received from 11 United Nations entities. Of these 11 entities, the following 3 indicated that they were not able to provide or did not have any information to submit on the issue: the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the United Nations Children's Fund and the World Food Programme. According to the information received, during the period under review, the following eight organizations of the United Nations system continued to provide support to the peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories, pursuant to the relevant resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Special Committee.

[1] A dispute exists between the Governments of Argentina and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland concerning sovereignty over the Falkland Islands (Malvinas) (see ST/CS/SER.A/42).

A. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

5. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) provided the following information regarding American Samoa, French Polynesia, Guam and New Caledonia.

Regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific

6. The regional road map for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific[2] was adopted at the Fourth Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development, held in Bangkok from 29 to 31 March 2017, and endorsed by the Commission in its resolution 73/9 of 19 May 2017. It embodies the region's vision for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, and also provides the framework for the secretariat's work in supporting its members and associate members in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

7. The regional road map identifies priority areas for regional cooperation and collaboration among member States with an emphasis on practical means of implementation to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Key areas, namely data and statistics, technology, financing for development, policy coherence, regional partnerships, social development, disaster risk reduction and resilience, climate change, management of natural resources, connectivity, and energy, also set out the direction and approaches for the secretariat's normative, analytical and capacity-building work, as well as for strategic partnerships with agencies of the United Nations and other stakeholders.

Asia-Pacific Countries with Special Needs Development Report

8. The Commission, in the *Asia-Pacific Countries with Special Needs Development Report 2017: Investing in Infrastructure for an Inclusive and Sustainable Future*,[3] provides analysis and policy recommendations related to the three pillars of sustainable development, with a focus on countries with special needs. The annual reports provide economic, social and environmental development analysis related to associate members American Samoa, French Polynesia, Guam and New Caledonia, on the basis of data availability.

B. Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

9. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) provided the information presented below pursuant to paragraph 12 of General Assembly resolution 72/92 on economic and other activities which affect the interests of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories and paragraph 7 of Assembly resolution 72/93 on the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations.

10. Natural disasters are a major development challenge for the Caribbean, which is the second most disaster-prone region in the world, after Asia. Natural disasters impact major sectors, such as tourism and agriculture, have knock-on effects on gross domestic product (GDP) and exports, and increase public debt.

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[2] E/ESCAP/73/31, annex II. Available from http://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/publications/SDGs-Regional-Roadmap.pdf.

[3] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.17.II.F.9. Available from http://www.unescap.org/publications/asia-pacific-countries-special-needs-2017.

11. The 2017 hurricane season was unprecedented for the subregion. Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, two category 5 hurricanes, both severely impacted the northern Caribbean in September 2017, including the Non-Self-Governing Territories of Anguilla, British Virgin Islands, the Turks and Caicos Islands, the United States Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico.

12. The impact of those events further exposed the vulnerability of the Territories to external shocks, given their limited economic resources, coupled with an inability to influence prices and global demand for their goods, and high transportation costs facing their fragile economies. Moreover, for the most part, the Territories share similar characteristics that contribute to their environmental vulnerability, including their relatively low and flat topology, scarce land resources, high population densities (especially along coastal areas), small vulnerable watersheds, high levels of species endemism, proximity to active tectonic plates and relatively scarce water resources. In addition, they are located within a very active hurricane belt.[4]

13. Following the passage of the devastating hurricanes, and in response to requests from the Territories for technical cooperation support, ECLAC fielded damage and loss assessment missions to Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands and the Turks and Caicos Islands.

14. In Anguilla, the tourism sector, the driving force of the economy, was most affected by the hurricanes. While the damages were significant, estimated at 275 million East Caribbean dollars (EC$) (primarily to buildings, equipment, furniture and landscaping), the losses represented a longer-term impact. Losses to the tourism sector were estimated at another EC$ 270 million, rolling out to 2019 (2017: EC$ 101.2 million; 2018: EC$ 168.1 million; and 2019: EC$ 898 thousand). In addition, the reduced tourist arrivals were expected to have spillover effects on the rest of the economy. Given the sweeping effects of the hurricanes on the domestic economy, current revenues were projected to decline by 21 per cent to EC $185.5 million, from a pre-hurricane target of EC$ 215 million.

15. In the British Virgin Islands, the assessment mission estimated the total costs at US$ 2.3 billion. Of that total, damages were estimated at US$ 1.6 billion, with the productive sectors, social sector and infrastructure accounting for 41.9, 40.2, and 17.6 per cent, respectively. Losses were estimated at US$ 444 million, of which 82.2 percent was in the productive sectors. Overall, tourism was the sector most affected, sustaining 46.6 per cent of total costs, 41.3 per cent of damages, and 81.5 percent of total losses. As a main source of employment, the suspension of operations in the tourism sector, coupled with the severe damage or destruction of the housing stock which became temporarily or permanently uninhabitable, resulted in further spill-over effects on the social sector.

16. Moderate damage was sustained in the Turks and Caicos Islands. The total costs were estimated at US$ 520 million, of which US$ 289.6 million represented damages, primarily in tourism and housing. Some setback is expected to economic development and social well-being, with long-term impacts on the economy, society and the environment. Plans for national and local development need to be realigned to allow for the redirection of financial and human resources towards the process of reconstruction.

17. In all of the assessments, ECLAC proffered sector-specific recommendations based on the analyses of sectoral experts. The proposals were intended to inform a progressive strategy that placed resilience at the forefront and formed part of a comprehensive approach to reduce vulnerabilities, improve risk mitigation strategies and promote multisectoral collaboration in the disaster risk management process.

[4] See ECLAC, ("Study on the vulnerability and resilience of Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS)", document LC/CAR/L.354, p. 22. Available from http://repositorio.cepal.org/handle/11362/38568.

Ultimately, the 2030 Agenda and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, with integrated and indivisible goals and targets, offer an opportunity to address vulnerability and promote resilience in the subregion. In particular, at least 25 targets in 10 of the Goals[5] are particularly important to addressing vulnerabilities in the countries and Territories adversely impacted by the hurricanes.

18. In addition to supporting the Territories in the aftermath of the passage of Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, the Commission continued to provide a political forum for the Territories to engage in high-level discussions aimed at addressing the development challenges of the subregion. For instance, the British Virgin Islands participated in the eighteenth meeting of the Monitoring Committee of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee on 19 May 2017.

19. In the areas of disaster risk management and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Commission also engaged the Territories in capacity-building initiatives (see table).

Date	*Event*	*Participating Territories*
24–27 January 2017	Planning for Disaster Risk Management and Disaster Assessment Methodology in the Context of the 2030 Development Agenda and the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals	British Virgin Islands
14–16 February 2017	Caribbean symposium on mainstreaming the Sustainable Development Goals in national development planning	Anguilla, British Virgin Islands, Montserrat, United States Virgin Islands
18 May 2017	Workshop to accelerate Sustainable Development Goal implementation in the Caribbean	British Virgin Islands
14–16 November 2017	Workshop on TradeCAN, MagicPlus and WITS[a]	Montserrat
1 December 2017	Expert group meeting on planning for the 2020 round of censuses in the Caribbean	British Virgin Islands
13–14 December 2017	Subregional workshop on implementing evidence-based policy planning for Sustainable Development	British Virgin Islands

[a] Trade software packages: TradeCAN — Trade Competitiveness Analysis of Nations; MagicPlus — Module to Analyse the Growth of International Commerce; and WITS — World Integrated Trade Solution. Available from https://repositorio.cepal.org.

20. Finally, the Commission continues to include detailed coverage of the economic performance of the Territories of Anguilla and Montserrat in *Economic Survey of the Caribbean*,[6] published annually, and the *Preliminary Overview of the Economies of the Caribbean*[7] and is working towards expanding coverage to other Territories.

[5] Goals 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 9, 11, 13, 14 and 15.

[6] The most recent edition is *Economic Survey of the Caribbean 2017* (United Nations publication, LC/CAR/TS.2017/9).

[7] See *Preliminary Overview of the Economies of the Caribbean, 2016–2017* (United Nations publication, LC/CAR/L.503).

C. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

21. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) provides support for sustainable development policies and practices in agriculture, forestry, fisheries and food security. FAO assistance to the Non-Self-Governing Territories is facilitated by its field offices, including the Subregional Office for the Caribbean, located in Barbados, and the Subregional Office for the Pacific Islands, located in Samoa.

22. Non-Self-Governing Territories, in particular small islands, are highly sensitive to both climatic and non-climatic shocks, owing to their geophysical characteristics and socioeconomic vulnerabilities. There is increasing evidence that natural disasters and environmental stresses influence migration patterns through the direct and indirect effects they have on livelihoods and well-being; in turn, migration shapes the social and economic landscapes where sustainable development takes place. It is therefore key to understand and appraise the relationship between natural disasters, environmental stresses and migration in those Territories in order to enhance the effectiveness of the measures aimed at accelerating progress in the economic and social sectors. Doing so would make it possible to tackle the challenges and harness the opportunities for sustainable development stemming from migration.

Subregional Office in Barbados

23. The Subregional Office in Barbados hosts the secretariat of the Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission. This regional fishery body, established in 1973, with 34 member States, includes the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland among its members. The Non-Self-Governing Territories of Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Montserrat and the Turks and Caicos Islands have participated at various levels in the technical and scientific advisory activities of the Commission. During 2017 their involvement has been mainly through the participation of Montserrat in meetings of the Working Group on illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing. As a result, Montserrat has benefitted from capacity-building, awareness-raising, technical assistance and information dissemination by FAO on such matters, using resources mobilized by the secretariat of the Commission from the members and donors.

24. In recent years the territories of Anguilla, Bermuda and Montserrat have formally represented the United Kingdom at the sessions of the Commission. At the sessions, regional fisheries management and conservation recommendations are reviewed and adopted for voluntary implementation by the member States, including the Non-Self-Governing Territories in the Wider Caribbean Region/Western Central Atlantic. A list of important activities related to regional fisheries and aquaculture in which the Non-Self-Governing Territories in the Caribbean participated in 2017 is set out below.

25. With respect to the work of FAO in the area of plant and animal production and health, representatives from the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Montserrat and the Turks and Caicos Islands participate in the Plant Health Directors Forum and the Caribbean Animal Health Network and benefit from various training activities, information sharing and the like, as part of the two networks.

Subregional Office in Samoa

FAO and Tokelau

26. Tokelau joined FAO as an Associate Member in 2011 and has received technical assistance from FAO along with other members of FAO in the Pacific. The three atolls, Atafu, Nukunonu and Fakaofo, with a total land area of 12 km^2 are separated by some 60 to 90 kilometres of open ocean. Except for Fakaofo (which has two

villages), the population of each atoll is concentrated in a single village on the western shore, close to a small natural pass into the central lagoon. This allows canoes and smaller boats to transport passengers and cargo from larger ships docked in the deeper open sea. Tokelau connects with the wider world through a fortnightly shipping link to Samoa which lies approximately 500 km to the south; there is currently no air transportation servicing Tokelau. Isolation and lack of resources greatly restrain economic development and confine agriculture to the subsistence level. The territory relies on aid from New Zealand.

27. The atolls are comprised of calcium carbonate coral reefs, sands and rock. Low fertility of the coral-sand soil means that only a few food crops such as breadfruit, coconut, pandanus, giant swamp taro and banana can be supported at subsistence level, while livestock is limited to poultry and a few pigs. With limited local food production, consumer demand for less traditional foods has increased the quantity of imported foods coming onto Tokelau shores over the last few years.

28. According to FAO, marine resources are Tokelau's largest economic resource and are vital for food security; therefore, sustainable management is a high priority. Management of Tokelau's offshore exclusive economic zone — of more than 300,000 km^2, particularly in regard to illegal commercial fishing, needs to be strengthened. Current challenges in the fisheries sector include lack of resources and capacity; the need to strengthen sustainable management of inshore resources; lack of regular and efficient transport to expedite delivery of fish to external markets; and limited means to manage the exclusive economic zone, especially in regard to illegal commercial fishing activities.

29. Safety at sea is an issue, and the situation in Tokelau is similar to that of other cases in the Pacific in which few measures are in place to monitor and record accidents and emergencies at sea in the small-scale fisheries sector.

30. The Tokelau atolls are only three to five metres above sea level, making the territory very vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and sea level rise. This is already evident with increased coastal erosion, storm surges and inundation. Furthermore, severe tropical storms have been more frequent in recent years with cyclones causing extensive damage. Climate change also poses significant risks to the supply of inshore marine resources as well as the life cycle of fish, resulting in a gradual disappearance of some species. This is threatening the food supply for the villages, as fish is the staple food. A potential climate change impact on migration of ocean fish also presents a risk to the fish resources available from the exclusive economic zone.

31. According to the 2015/16 household income and expenditure survey, non-communicable diseases are a serious problem. Estimates based on survey data indicated that 23 per cent of adults were overweight and 67 per cent were obese. Smoking and alcohol consumption are quite high and the incidence of diabetes is on the increase. The Government has taken some steps to combat this, including taxation of alcoholic drinks and tobacco.

32. A new cycle of the multi-country FAO Country Programming Framework 2018–2022 was approved for the Pacific, including Tokelau. In addition to the region-wide priorities, in Tokelau FAO interventions will reflect the priority outcomes of the Tokelau National Strategic Plan 2010–2015 and national strategies for food security and agriculture and fisheries development. Accordingly, the focus of the Tokelau Framework is on the resilience of food and nutrition security to impacts of disasters and climate change. The overall outcome aims at a sustainable increase in the production of domestic agriculture products and healthy consumption of diverse, safe and nutritious food. Three outputs support this outcome: (a) evidence-based recommendations developed and promoted to incentivize the production and

consumption of safe and healthy food; (b) sustainable and climate-smart practices promoted to help build resilient agriculture, fisheries and forestry production systems; and (c) food control and business practices identified and promoted to facilitate efficient agrifood value chains that provide safe, nutritious and affordable food. FAO support to Tokelau is anticipated under multi-country projects.

33. FAO began a new project to support food security and build the resilience of fishing communities through the provision of tools and capacity-building to reduce the risk of loss of life at sea. The key stakeholders are the Tokelau Department of Fisheries and agencies responsible for small-scale fisheries, village councils and subsistence/small-scale fishermen. Beneficiaries include Tokelau village councils, the Department of Fisheries, fishermen and youth in schools. The project is needed by the island communities to reduce loss of life at sea through capacity-building onshore as well as providing critical tools and training to fishermen at sea to communicate with rescue services during emergencies. The project intends to build safety and crew safety capacities of fishermen on fishing vessels.

34. FAO has active technical cooperation projects to strengthen capacity in home gardening, healthy food awareness and effective biosecurity, and to improve food security and resilience of fishing communities through safer fishing operations. In addition, Tokelau is one of the members participating in the FAO-UNDP-Global Environment Facility project entitled, "Implementation of global and regional oceanic fisheries conventions and related instruments in the Pacific small island developing States".

Regional activities of the Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission with Non-Self-Governing Territories in the Caribbean region in 2017

35. Montserrat participated in the first meeting of the regional Working Group on illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, held in Barbados from 1 to 2 March 2017. The joint working group is comprised of the Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission, Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism and the Central American Fisheries and Aquaculture Organization. At the meeting, attended by 52 experts representing 21 members of the Commission, many aspects of illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing were considered. The first meeting of the Working Group contributed to: (a) increasing awareness and understanding of the illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing problem in the Caribbean region; and (b) increasing capacity for a more effective collaboration in preventing, deterring and eliminating such fishing in the Caribbean region, with emphasis on experiences from other regions with vessel monitoring systems and monitoring, control and surveillance supporting measures, and on international and regional instruments to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, such as the Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Elimi ate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (FAO Conference resolution 12/2009). The participants also finalized and agreed on the Working Group's terms of reference and work plan for the period 2017–2018 for endorsement by the Caribbean Regional Fisheries Mechanism and the Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission, and discussed elements to be included in a regional plan of action to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.

36. Montserrat participated in the second meeting of the regional Working Group on illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, held in Barbados, from 19 to 21 September 2017. Thirty-five fisheries monitoring, control and surveillance officers, fisheries managers and other experts from 16 members of the Commission participated in the meeting. At the meeting, the fisheries monitoring, control and surveillance officers were updated on the International Plan of Action to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing, the Global Record of Fishing Vessels, Refrigerated Transport Vessels and Supply Vessels and specific

measures needed in the Caribbean region to effectively reduce such fishing. Participants in this technical meeting also discussed and agreed upon various essential fisheries management measures, such as fishing vessel marking and identification, the establishment of a regional fishing vessel record and regional illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing vessel lists. Those measures will, once adopted by the Commission, allow the fisheries inspectors, coast guard, navy and port officials to easily identify fishing vessels and see if the vessels have the necessary authorizations to fish.

D. International Monetary Fund

37. The engagement of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) with the dependent Territories of a member constitutes part of a broader engagement with the member. Separate assessments of the issues specific to the dependent Territories are not common. For that reason, IMF has only limited information to share. In the past year, there have been three missions for technical assistance on external sector statistics to the following Non-Self-Governing Territories: Anguilla: a mission from 27 to 31 March 2017; British Virgin Islands: a mission from 20 to 31 March 2017; and Cayman Islands: a mission from 16 to 26 May 2017. IMF notes that the documents resulting from the missions are not in the public domain.

E. United Nations Development Programme

38. The activities of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) related to the Territories under the purview of the Special Committee on Decolonization are set out below.

Asia and the Pacific

Tokelau

39. UNDP completed its support to the Tokelau energy sector support project. The final evaluation recommends upscaling the project to reduce domestic demand for electricity. In parallel, UNDP continues its support to green energy production through a biogas project supported by a Global Environment Facility small grant and a conversion of waste-to-energy project supported by the Government of Norway. Following the completion of the Tokelau Good Governance Initiation Plan, a full-scale project document (2018–2021) has been approved by the Government of Tokelau. The Tokelau good governance project will cover three aspects of governance, namely: (a) decision-making; (b) results-based management and budgeting; and (c) transparent and efficient public service delivery. Resources for full project implementation are currently being mobilized from the Governments of New Zealand and Tokelau. In 2017, UNDP delivery for Tokelau was $73,517.

Latin America and the Caribbean

40. In 2017, UNDP aligned its work to the United Nations Multi-Country Sustainable Development Framework, a single strategic framework that will guide the work of all agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations in the Caribbean for the period 2017–2021. This strategic framework was signed in 2017 by 21 Governments in the region and the United Nations system, including the following Non-Self-Governing Territories: Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands and Montserrat.

41. The UNDP Regional Programme for Latin America and the Caribbean has been focused on addressing three main priorities in 2017–2018: climate resilience, disaster risk reduction and implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

42. Of significance in 2017 was the impact of Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria — two category five storms — which caused widespread destruction, erasing decades of development progress. UNDP developed a comprehensive strategy to support the affected countries and Territories — including the British Virgin Islands and the Turks and Caicos Islands. Among the areas of support were:

- Immediate post-disaster recovery planning through the deployment of Early Recovery Advisers to augment the coordination capacity of the Governments
- Restoration of livelihoods and stimulation of local economies through cash-for-work programmes in such areas as waste management and debris removal
- Comprehensive building damage assessments in partnership with national authorities and Microsoft Corporation
- Provision of roofing materials and technical advice on building back better to help in the restoration of government buildings and the homes of people affected

A number of specific actions undertaken at the territorial level in 2017 are set out below.

Montserrat

43. In 2017, UNDP sponsored the participation of three government representatives in the regional conference on the Sustainable Development Goals in the Caribbean, entitled "Caribbean Development — the 2030 Agenda in Perspective". The delegation was led by the Deputy Premier of Montserrat.

British Virgin Islands

44. UNDP is continuing to support the post-Irma and Maria recovery process in the Territory. In the immediate aftermath, the UNDP Recovery Adviser and debris and waste management expert provided guidance to the Government on the overall recovery process as well as management of the tons of debris across the islands. Working with the Department of Waste Management, UNDP is administering an emergency employment programme providing livelihood support to affected persons and addressing the pressing issue of road clearance and debris removal and recovery to facilitate the continued recovery processes.

Subregional, including Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands and Montserrat

45. UNDP is embarking upon a subregional project on improving recovery planning and capacities for resilience in the Caribbean, through which Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands and Montserrat will have an opportunity to enhance national capacities in post-disaster needs assessment.

F. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

46. Six Non-Self-Governing Territories have the status of associate members of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), namely Anguilla (2013), the British Virgin Islands (1983), the Cayman Islands (1999), Monserrat (2015), New Caledonia (2017) and Tokelau (2001). UNESCO has been supporting certain Non-Self-Governing Territories through various platforms of action and long-established cooperation relationships, particularly in the exchange of good practices and capacity-building activities organized at the regional, subregional

and local levels. Relevant activities in the various areas of competence of UNESCO are summarized below.

Education

47. In March 2016, the British Virgin Islands became a member of the UNESCO International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030 (Teacher Task Force) and participated in the eighth Policy Dialogue Forum of the Teacher Task Force, held in Mexico City in March 2016. Created in 2008, the Teacher Task Force is a voluntary global alliance of various stakeholders working together to address the "teacher gap", as well as implement and monitor target 4.c of the Sustainable Development Goals to achieve the education 2030 targets and commitments. The Teacher Task Force includes Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, international development agencies, civil society, private sector entities and agencies of the United Nations.

Natural sciences

48. French Polynesia hosted an international tsunami workshop in March 2017. The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO, the Tsunami Commission of the International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics (IUGG) and the French Polynesia Tsunami Warning Centre organized the event. The workshop had two main sessions, one on science, entitled "The forecast and observations of the recent (2007–2016) tsunamis in the Pacific", and the other on disaster management, entitled "Improving tsunami response: lessons and initiatives by disaster management organizations". Around 25 scientific researchers participated in the disaster management workshop, including one from New Caledonia.

49. The Fakarava Biosphere Reserve is located in French Polynesia. Designated in 1977, the reserve was extended and renamed in 2006. In 2016, other management procedures were introduced. In 2016, after other management procedures were introduced, the site was updated and the zoning adapted to local legislation, which was approved by the municipality of Fakarava during the periodic review process. The management committee has been extended to include five associations covering the different atolls in which various stakeholders are represented. An interdisciplinary research council was created to coordinate research and ensure its societal relevance as well as linkages with the knowledge and practices of local communities. Local initiatives promote the use of the biosphere designation to attract tourism and funding and promote the site through education. There has been a significant increase in the number of tourists visiting Fakarava. While this is a positive step towards promoting local development, considering the decline of pearl culture and the general increase in unemployment, there is a need to move forward towards finalizing a management plan aimed at ensuring the sustainability of tourism development. Moreover, the exchange of good practices and networking with other biosphere reserves are key to this region. In that regard, Fakarava hosted a regional seminar in June 2017, inviting the Pacific small island developing States.

50. In contrast, in 2017 the Government of the United States of America withdrew the Virgin Islands National Park, located on the island of St. John, from the UNESCO World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

51. In March 2016, a tsunami early warning exercise took place in the Caribbean region. The following Non-Self-Governing Territories took part in the exercise: Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Montserrat, the Turks and Caicos Islands and the United States Virgin Islands. The purpose of the test was to identify possible weaknesses in the Tsunami and other Coastal Hazards Warning

System for the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions, which was established in 2005 under the auspices of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission.

Culture

World Heritage

52. A small number of World Heritage properties are located in Non-Self-Governing Territories (see E/2016/49, para. 24). There are also a number of sites located in Non-Self-Governing Territories, which are included in the tentative list of States parties for nomination to World Heritage status (Ibid., para. 27). Whereas nomination files have to be submitted by those States parties that have ratified the 1972 Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, the local authorities of the territories are usually involved in the preparation of the files and the day-to-day management of the properties. Non-Self-Governing territories participate in World Heritage Committee sessions and may make statements as part of the State party delegation. They also often participate in international meetings, capacity-building programmes and training courses organized by UNESCO.

Underwater cultural heritage

53. Several Non-Self-Governing Territories hold important underwater cultural heritage and/or are benefiting from their valorization. Representatives of Non-Self-Governing Territories that hold such sites occasionally participate in and benefit from capacity-building programmes organized by UNESCO under its 2001 Convention on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage.

Culture for sustainable development

54. From 22 May to 4 June 2016, Guam hosted the twelfth Festival of Pacific Arts. Organized every four years since 1972, the Festival brings together performing artists, practitioners and artisans from around the Pacific region for two weeks of festivity. It is a major regional cultural event and rallying opportunity in the Pacific that unites Pacific peoples, enhances mutual understanding and celebrates cultural diversity. A total of 27 Pacific island countries and territories took part in the twelfth edition, including American Samoa, French Polynesia, New Caledonia and Pitcairn.

55. During the Festival, on 25 May 2016, the Third Meeting of the Pacific Ministers for Culture took place. The Meeting offered an opportunity for the cultural authorities from the Pacific Island States and territories to review the Regional Cultural Strategy: Investing in Pacific Cultures 2010–2020 and discuss a regional approach to the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions adopted in 2005.

Communication and information

56. Through its Memory of the World programme, UNESCO has worked to preserve documentary heritage and strengthen archives in Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Guam and Montserrat.

57. Within the framework of its Information for All programme, UNESCO has built capacities to use information and communications technology for sustainable development in the Cayman Islands. The organization also led capacity-building activities for media associations and journalists to promote press freedom in New Caledonia.

G. Universal Postal Union

58. The Universal Postal Union (UPU), as an intergovernmental organization of a technical character and specialized agency of the United Nations, is currently composed of 192 member countries, comprising 190 sovereign States. The other members include the "Overseas Territories for whose international relations the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is responsible", to which earlier Congresses had granted the separate status of member countries. In that regard, UPU notes that several of the Non-Self-Governing Territories under the purview of the Special Committee form part of the aforementioned United Kingdom Overseas Territories.

59. Other Territories falling under the situation described in article 23 of the UPU Constitution ("Application of the Acts of the Union to territories for whose international relations a member country is responsible") concern the United States, the member country responsible for American Samoa, Guam and the United States Virgin Islands. The same situation applies for France, with regard to French Polynesia and New Caledonia, and for New Zealand, with regard to Tokelau.

60. For all such Territories, the relevant provisions of the Acts of UPU apply in full, particularly with regard to the operation and regulation of international postal services and due fulfilment of the obligations arising from the Acts of UPU. Some of these Territories also benefit from technical cooperation and other UPU projects (as was the case for Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands and the Turks and Caicos Islands in 2017).

61. Moreover, a number of Territories have their own designated operators (that is, the governmental or non-governmental entities officially designated by the member country to operate international postal services and to fulfil the related obligations arising out of the Acts of UPU on their territory), such as Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, the Falkland Islands (Malvinas),[1] Gibraltar, Montserrat, New Caledonia, Saint Helena and the Turks and Caicos Islands. UPU also reports that it does not have activities in Western Sahara.

H. World Health Organization

62. The World Health Organization (WHO) provides examples of its activities in Non-Self-Governing Territories in two of its regions (Americas and Western Pacific), as set out below.

Region of the Americas

Anguilla

- In December 2017, through the continued support of the Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO), Anguilla was certified as having eliminated mother-to-child transmission of HIV/AIDS and congenital syphilis
- Training was provided to address the core capacities of the International Health Regulations

- In 2016–17 PAHO/WHO supported the Ministry of Health in completing the STEPS[8] survey on non-communicable disease risk factors
- Following the passage of Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, PAHO/WHO provided support to the Ministry of Health and Social Development with particular emphasis on vector control, mental health and emergency recovery efforts
- During 2016–17 support was given to develop an adolescent health policy and an ageing policy
- Work was also conducted in the areas of food safety and the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases

Bermuda

63. The Bermuda Health Strategy 2014–2019 aims to provide a framework to restructure the health system to improve the quality of healthcare, increase access and contain health costs. The vision of the strategy is "Healthy people in healthy communities". PAHO/WHO provided technical cooperation in several areas in line with the strategic priorities identified in the PAHO/WHO Strategy for Technical Cooperation with the United Kingdom Overseas Territories in the Caribbean, 2016–2022.

Communicable diseases

- Vaccine preventable diseases. Bermuda successfully implemented vaccine supply stock management software in September 2017 to strengthen the operational and managerial capacity of the expanded programme on immunization. It was supplemented by the training of health-care workers in both the public and private sectors in the management of the vaccine cold chain. The training helped to facilitate the strengthening of collaboration between the Department of Health and the private health sector and should serve to facilitate strengthening of surveillance for vaccine preventable diseases in the future.
- Validation of the achievement of elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV and congenital syphilis. Bermuda was one of the six countries and Territories that received certification of the elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV in the Caribbean on 1 December 2017. During 2016, the validation report was submitted and was followed by both a virtual and field assessment visits which was completed in 2017. The validation will be good for two years.
- Antimicrobial resistance plan development. With the support and leadership of the PAHO Jamaica Office, Bermuda hosted its first multisectoral antimicrobial resistance workshop towards the development of an antimicrobial resistance action plan for Bermuda. This resulted in the nomination of the members of the National Antimicrobial Resistance Coordinating Committee, the nomination of the team lead and the development of the draft national antimicrobial resistance action plan.

Non-communicable diseases

- Nutrition. PAHO/WHO provided guidance in the implementation of the baby-friendly hospital initiative, and 13 health workers, including nurses, health

[8] The WHO STEPwise approach to surveillance is a simple, standardized method for collecting, analysing and disseminating data in WHO member States. Available from http://www.who.int/chp/steps/en/.

visitors and nutrition personnel, were trained in breastfeeding counselling to support this initiative as well as primary health-care services. Work began on developing an infant and young child feeding policy and a national nutrition policy. Support was also given in the development of protocols and procedures related to some nutrition services.

- Risk factors. Bermuda successfully completed the update of the Well Bermuda plan in 2017, using data from the STEPS survey and other relevant data sources. The new tobacco regulations became effective as of July 2016, and staff participated in subregional training on taxation and in other training on smoking cessation.

Health systems and services

- Human resources for health strategy developed. The situation analysis of human resources for health was conducted through a systematic process of stakeholders' engagement and consultations and resulted in the Human Resources for Health Strategic Plan. This was in line with the Bermuda Health Strategy.

- Enhancing cancer treatment at the Bermuda Cancer and Health Centre. PAHO/WHO conducted an assessment and provided technical guidance during the process of incorporating a linear accelerator in the cancer treatment centre to ensure meeting quality and safety standards. Radiation therapy, an essential component of cancer therapy, will now be offered for the first time in Bermuda at the Bermuda Cancer and Health Centre. Previously all patients were accessing radiation therapy overseas. The assessment was critical, owing to the potential to cause significant and irreversible harm to patients if radiation therapy is misapplied, as well as to workers and members of the public resulting from exposure to ionizing radiation. The assessment by PAHO experts during two missions also contributed to local capacity-building in the area of radiation safety as well as to knowledge of critical policies and governance structures to ensure equitable access to the new services and safeguard quality and safety.

- Access to affordable and quality essential medicines. In 2017, Bermuda stabilized routine procurement of antiretroviral drugs through the PAHO Strategic Fund after a pilot in 2016. This resulted in significant cost reduction as the small population size of Bermuda would not allow negotiating favourable prices for procurement of such a small volume of medicines on its own. Bermuda is considering including procurement of drugs for treatment of non-communicable diseases through the Strategic Fund in the future.

- Training in integrated approaches for the assessment, selection, incorporation and rational use of medicines and other health technologies took place in a training workshop jointly with Jamaica and the Cayman Islands.

Building safe and resilient environments that respond to threats and emergencies which have public health consequences

- Bermuda participated in the Health in All Policies and Climate Change and Health meetings held in Jamaica to increase awareness on those topics and achieve better understanding of progress in Bermuda.

- Infectious hazard management training. Bermuda hosted the international Americas Cup in 2017 and as such sought assistance from PAHO/WHO for preparedness and health-risk management of the mass gathering event to prevent and respond to health emergency events, food safety and environmental health. This resulted in infectious hazard management training for health care staff and

the development of an events management plan for the health sector. Support was also given in the monitoring and management of the environmental health aspects of the related premises.

- Emergency response. In 2017, Bermuda was spared from hurricanes. Bermuda was, however, able to assist the British Virgin Islands and Dominica through the provision of one physician who is part of the Caribbean Medical Response Team.

British Virgin Islands

- PAHO/WHO continued its support in the prevention of mother to child transmission of HIV/AIDS and congenital syphilis.
- Following Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, PAHO/WHO provided emergency relief in all areas but especially for vector control.
- PAHO/WHO continued to support the recovery effort and the strengthening of mental health systems.

Cayman Islands

64. PAHO/WHO provided technical cooperation in several areas in line with the strategic priorities identified in the PAHO/WHO Strategy for Technical Cooperation with the United Kingdom Overseas Territories in the Caribbean 2016–2022.

Communicable diseases

- Validation of the achievement of elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV and congenital syphilis. The Cayman Islands was one of the six countries and Territories that received certification of the elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV in the Caribbean on 1 December 2017. During 2016, the validation report was submitted and was followed by a field assessment visit which was completed in 2017. The validation will be good for two years.
- Vaccine preventable diseases. Certification of elimination of measles in September 2016 through the documentation and verification of sustainability of elimination for the period 2012–2015.
- Zoonosis surveillance strengthening. A team from PAHO/WHO conducted an assessment of the zoonotic, foodborne and antimicrobial resistance surveillance programme in the Cayman Island in July 2016. The objectives of the mission were to assess surveillance systems for zoonotic, food-borne and antimicrobial resistance and the level of integration of information between Ministries of Health and Agriculture. It was an important step towards the promotion of the "One Health" approach.
- Antimicrobial plan development supported. PAHO supported the finalization and submission of the Antimicrobial Resistance National Strategy and Action Plan for the Cayman Islands towards the prevention of antimicrobial resistance.
- Influenza surveillance. Support to build local capacity to conduct influenza surveillance was provided by a technical adviser from Headquarters. Persons were trained in molecular testing in Brazil and a field mission was conducted in October 2017.

Non-communicable diseases

- National Mental Health Policy development supported. A national mental health policy was completed in 2017 and is expected to be tabled in the Legislative

Assembly. The policy establishes the framework needed to guide the efforts to integrate mental health services into primary health care and undertake the construction of the Cayman Islands first residential mental health retreat, a 54-bed facility housed in nine cottages, for patients in need of residential mental health care.

- Prevention of obesity in children supported. Activities to strengthen programmes for the prevention and control of obesity were highlighted in preparation for the development of a plan to address this problem in children and adolescents. The pertinent strategies and plans for health and other relevant sectors were reviewed and the actions related to obesity prevention and control identified and collated. They will be incorporated into the development of a plan for childhood and adolescent health.

Life course

- Capacity-building to respond to sexual and intimate partner violence. In an effort to enhance the health system's response to sexual and intimate partner violence, training was conducted for health-care workers.

Health systems and services

- Completion of the Health in the Americas chapter for the Cayman Islands
- Participation in a health technology meeting held in Jamaica
- Capacity-building in the International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems (ICD-10)
- Training in integrated approaches for the assessment, selection, incorporation and rational use of medicines and other health technologies took place in a training workshop jointly with Jamaica and Bermuda

Building safe and resilient environments that respond to threats and emergencies which have public health consequences

- The Cayman Islands participated in the climate change and health meetings held in Jamaica to increase awareness of these topics and have better understanding of the progress in Bermuda.
- In 2017, the Cayman Islands was spared from hurricanes. The Cayman Islands, however, was able to assist other Territories under the administration of the United Kingdom that were affected by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria.

Montserrat

- In December 2017, with the continued support of PAHO/WHO, the Territory was declared as having eliminated mother-to-child transmission of HIV/AIDS and congenital syphilis.
- Support was provided for vector control as part of the mitigation efforts for the Zika outbreak.
- Health systems strengthening and a review of the planned new hospital were areas of technical cooperation provided by PAHO.
- PAHO also supported the planning of the non-communicable disease risk factor survey, STEPS, which is expected to be fully implemented in 2018.

Turks and Caicos Islands

65. PAHO/WHO provided technical cooperation in several areas, in line with the strategic priorities identified in the PAHO/WHO Strategy for Technical Cooperation with the United Kingdom Overseas Territories (UKOTs) in the Caribbean 2016–2022.

Communicable diseases

- Vaccine preventable diseases. PAHO/WHO supported the participation of a Territory representative in a regional meeting to plan for the introduction of human papilloma virus vaccine (which is planned for 2018). Introduction of the vaccine is aimed at reducing the risk factors and incidence of cervical cancer. The Territory received technical assistance through PAHO/WHO for introducing electronic methods for improved efficiency in the management of immunization records and monitoring of vaccine coverage.
- Zoonosis surveillance strengthening. PAHO/WHO provided technical assistance to the Territory on Zika virus prevention, control, detection and risk management.

Non-communicable diseases

- National mental health policy development supported.
- WHO trained health personnel to improve service delivery for mental health.
- PAHO/WHO supported the participation of one representative from the Territory in a mental health literacy training workshop held in the Bahamas. This is to catalyse collaboration with the educational sector to increase awareness, reduce stigmatization of persons with mental health problems and link affected youths to health services.
- Supported the prevention of obesity in children.
- PAHO/WHO assisted the Territory in developing a monitoring and evaluation plan to assess the outputs of and outcomes from implementing the national plan of action for the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases, and the Turks and Caicos Islands national health sector strategic plan 2016–2020, entitled "Vision 2020 Health Sector Plan".
- PAHO/WHO trained medical personnel on breastfeeding practices with the aim of increasing the prevalence of breastfeeding among mothers and better nutritional outcomes for babies. PAHO/WHO provided technical assistance towards the development of a school nutrition policy.

Life course

- Strengthening child and maternal health services. WHO supported the introduction of electronic records for the management of perinatal health records.

Health systems and services

- PAHO/WHO provided technical assistance to the health authorities to identify the main drivers of observed increases in costs and opportunities for greater cost efficiencies for hospital care and the treatment abroad programme.
- PAHO/WHO assigned a consultant to provide technical assistance to develop a national Health Information Management system.

- PAHO/WHO provided technical assistance to expand the service delivery options for primary health care to include health promotion, community outreach and improved linkages between primary health care and hospital care. The aim is to reduce congestion in hospitals caused by patients preferentially accessing hospital services for conditions that can be handled at the primary health care level.
- PAHO/WHO provided technical assistance to the health authorities to better identify needs and train and manage human resources for health.
- PAHO/WHO assigned a consultant to the Territory to assess needs and make recommendations for establishing a blood bank.

Building safe and resilient environments that respond to threats and emergencies which have public health consequences

- Health personnel were trained in "psychological first aid" immediately after Hurricane Maria to help them to deal with their own stress and to increase their skills in order to offer assistance to the wider population.
- PAHO/WHO assigned a consultant to the Territory who worked with the health emergency focal points in the Territory to assess and report on damage to hospitals and health facilities following Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria.
- PAHO/WHO assigned three physicians from the Bahamas to work at the primary health care level to temporarily relieve health care workers who had been traumatized by the impact of two hurricanes.

Western Pacific Region

66. During 2017, the main technical support to the Non-Self-Governing Territories was provided through the WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific, the WHO Representative Office for the South Pacific and the Samoa country office.

American Samoa

67. In 2017, WHO helped to organize a high-level meeting between American Samoa and Samoa on the elimination of lymphatic filariasis (commonly known as elephantiasis). It has enabled planning for simultaneous mass drug administration for both parties in 2018, which will not only save costs but also allow for better controlling the risk of spreading the disease across borders. Both parties also agreed to conduct annual programme reviews and planning workshops. Resources to achieve the action plans will be needed from both Governments and partners. Other achievements/deliverables in 2017 included an awareness campaign for World Antibiotic Awareness Week and situational analysis for antimicrobial resistance; promotion of hand hygiene practices in hospital and public settings in the "Save Lives: Clean Your Hands" campaign; and the first American Samoa — Samoa training for community representatives on chronic disease self-management.

French Polynesia

68. French Polynesia continues to provide to WHO, on a weekly basis, their health monitoring data, which are then published via the email-based outbreak notification and discussion forum of the Pacific Public Health Surveillance Network (PacNet). In 2017 WHO staff visited French Polynesia and travelled to Bora Bora to visit their water safety plant. French Polynesia participated in the twelfth Pacific Health Ministers Meeting in the Cook Islands, from 28–30 August 2017, supported by WHO.

New Caledonia

69. WHO supported the participation of New Caledonia in the fifth Regional Workshop on Leadership and Advocacy for the Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases, held in Saitama, Japan, from 12 to 15 September 2017, with a focus on physical activity. New Caledonia also participated, supported by WHO, in the regional meeting, Consultation on the Draft "Regional framework for health promotion in the Sustainable Development Goals" and Review of Progress on Regional Action Plans on Non-Communicable Diseases, Tobacco Free Initiative and Double Burden of Malnutrition, held in Manila, Philippines, from 15 to 19 May 2017. The nominated member from New Caledonia was selected by the Regional Director of the WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific to serve as a member of the combined Subregional Committees for the Certification of Poliomyelitis Eradication and Verification of Measles Elimination in Pacific Island Countries and Areas for an initial period of three years. New Caledonia participated in the twelfth Pacific Health Ministers Meeting in the Cook Islands, from 28–30 August 2017, supported by WHO.

Tokelau

70. Tokelau, in addition to dealing with the impact of climate change on health, is struggling with a non-communicable disease crisis. In that regard, WHO supported the Tokelau non-communicable disease summit in May 2017, which was attended by representatives of the General Fono, ministries, civil society organizations, the secretariat of the Pacific Community and the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. The main outcome of the summit led to much greater recognition of the problem and the planning of whole-of-society actions to address non-communicable diseases, including reconfirming the target for Tokelau Smoke-Free 2020; strengthening the ban on the importation of all fizzy drinks to Tokelau; launching discussion in the General Fono on increased taxation for alcoholic drinks; and reintroducing physical activity programmes in schools. The efforts of Tokelau were recognized by WHO through its 2017 World No Tobacco Day award. The summit has had a transformative effect, with commitments on all sides: for Department of Health, to bring services closer to the communities; for the General Fono, to gradually ban importation of all tobacco products and restrict importation of alcohol and unhealthy food; and for WHO and its partners to scale up support to the Government in addressing the non-communicable disease crisis and the impact of climate change on health. Tokelau participated in the twelfth Pacific Health Ministers Meeting in the Cook Islands, from 28–30 August 2017, supported by WHO.

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Economic, social and cultural rights

Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Summary

The present report, submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 48/141, focuses on the link between urbanization and human rights, particularly economic, social and cultural rights, as a contribution to the human rights-based implementation of the New Urban Agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The report outlines the key roles played by local and national authorities in ensuring that urbanization advances human rights and inclusive, sustainable and resilient societies, where all people can live in dignity. The report highlights several human rights challenges associated with rapid urbanization and examples of human rights-based approaches adopted by local and national authorities and other stakeholders to address those challenges "to ensure that no one is left behind".

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I. Introduction

1. The world is experiencing urbanization on an unprecedented scale. Over half of the world's population today lives in urban areas, a number expected to rise to 66 per cent by 2050.[1] 90 per cent of the world's population growth will take place in cities, particularly in Africa and Asia. In Africa, the number of urban dwellers is projected to increase from 400 million to 1.26 billion between 2010 and 2050.[2] In the next few decades, the majority of megacities will be located in developing countries, wielding increased influence on the global economy.[3] For example, the Pearl River Delta Metropolitan Region in China, created from the merging of Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Dongguan, Zhaoqing, Foshan, Huizhou, Jiangmen, Zhongshan and Zhuhai, is one of the most densely urbanized regions in the world and has a combined gross domestic product of over US$ 800 billion, which, if it were a country, would make it a member of the Group of 20.[4]

2. The increasing urbanization is due to a number of interlinked factors, primarily the demographic increase within cities, and people moving to urban areas in search of jobs, economic and other opportunities and better services. Other factors pushing people from rural to urban areas include: forced evictions; land grabbing that has deprived many rural communities of their means of subsistence; climate change, jeopardizing the accessibility and quality of land; and natural disasters. Cities are also absorbing a growing number of refugees and internally displaced persons who have fled conflicts, violence and natural disasters.

3. The rapid and spontaneous nature of urbanization brings significant challenges to sustainable development and the realization of human rights. Rapid population expansion in urban areas has placed significant pressure on services, transport and housing systems, and has resulted in greater disparities, inequalities and discrimination. In 2015, the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context, observed that "urban growth has been synonymous with astonishing accumulation of wealth for a few, accompanied by increasing poverty for many" (see A/70/270, para. 6). This is clearly illustrated by the growth in slums and informal settlements, where an increasing number of people live in inadequate living conditions and lack secure tenure of their housing and land. Many cities have criminalized camping, sleeping and begging in public. Such inequality can fuel instability and unrest, leading to protests and crises (see E/2016/58).

4. Yet urbanization can also be a positive force, with potential to advance human rights and ensure inclusive, sustainable and resilient societies. Cities can drive economic growth and social advancement, and embrace diversity with people of different backgrounds living together. Urbanization can improve people's access to services, including health and education, and decent work for all including the most marginalized. Urban public spaces are often used for peaceful demonstration. Moreover, cities have been at the forefront of defending and protecting civil and political rights and the rights of migrants and minorities. Many city administrations have taken steps to reduce emissions and pollution to protect people's right to a healthy environment.

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[1] See United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, *World Urbanization Prospects: The 2014 Revision, Highlights*. Available at https://esa.un.org/unpd/wup/publications/files/wup2014-highlights.pdf.

[2] See United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), *The State of African Cities 2014: Re-imagining sustainable urban transitions*. Available from https://unhabitat.org/books/state-of-african-cities-2014-re-imagining-sustainable-urban-transitions/.

[3] See UN-Habitat, *World Cities Report 2016, Urbanization and Development: Emerging Futures*. Available at http://wcr.unhabitat.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/WCR-2016-Full-Report.pdf.

[4] See Thijs Van Lindert, "Megacities as diplomatic powers in a neo-medieval world: interview with Parag Khanna", in *The Future of Human Rights in an Urban World: exploring opportunities, threats and challenges*, Thijs van Lindert and Doutje Lettinga, eds. (Amnesty International Netherlands, 2014).

5. As cities grow larger and more autonomous, they play an increasingly pivotal role in securing human rights for the vast majority of the population. Trends in decentralization have yielded greater responsibilities to them in policy areas such as transport and economic development and sometimes larger fiscal autonomy. Given their position at the forefront of urban planning and service delivery, they have a unique role and duty to ensure that the enjoyment of human rights is a reality for the poorest and most marginalized. Several cities, like Gwangju in the Republic of Korea and Nagpur in India, have declared themselves human rights cities and use the human rights framework to guide governance. Yet in many instances, central Governments have not given local authorities the necessary financial resources and legislative powers to realize the human rights of their local constituency.

6. To support the management of urbanization processes in a manner that allows all cities' inhabitants to enjoy their rights, the present report examines the human rights-related challenges and opportunities of urbanization, highlights the positive roles of different actors and provides examples of how urban planning that reflects the indivisibility of all human rights can ensure that urbanization benefits all and guarantees the creation of inclusive cities in accordance with Goal 11 of the Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda.

II. Linkages between urbanization and human rights

7. The human rights framework sets out key standards and obligations for advancing and developing urbanization processes and outcomes that are sustainable and socially inclusive; promote equality, combat discrimination in all its forms and empower individuals and communities. Moreover, well-designed and people-centred urbanization helps ensure the protection and the promotion of the human rights of all city dwellers.

8. Both the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the New Urban Agenda adopted in 2016 are strongly anchored in human rights. Virtually all of the Sustainable Development Goals, although not necessarily framed explicitly in human rights language, are directly linked to one or more human rights, and most targets reflect the content of corresponding human rights standards (see A/HRC/34/25). Both Agendas, and the political commitments contained therein, complement the human rights framework by affirming many existing norms and setting out a road map to achieve them. This includes specific commitments to make cities "inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable" (Sustainable Development Goal 11).

9. The central commitment to leave no one behind, anchored in the human rights principle of equality and non-discrimination, permeates both Agendas. Rapid urbanization is accompanied by increasing inequality, as evidenced by rapidly growing numbers of informal settlements, of people living in unacceptable conditions and of homeless persons. Under international human rights law, States have an obligation to ensure non-discrimination and equality, both formal and substantive. By having a core commitment to leave no one behind and to reach the furthest behind first, both Agendas aim to ensure that the human rights principle of equality and non-discrimination, as well as the protection of the most vulnerable, cut across all of their goals. While the 2030 Agenda specifically mentions some groups, such as indigenous peoples and persons with disabilities, the principle of equality and non-discrimination means that the commitment to leave no one behind is applicable to all groups and populations, both urban and rural (see A/HRC/34/25).

10. The human rights principle of equality and non-discrimination is also reflected in Sustainable Development Goal 5 on achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls and Goal 10 on reducing inequality within and between countries. In the New Urban Agenda, States committed to ensure that all persons have access to equal opportunities without discrimination of any kind; fully respect the rights of refugees, migrants and internally displaced persons, regardless of their migration status; and achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls by ensuring women's full and effective participation and equal rights in all fields.

11. The right to adequate housing is at the centre of urbanization. This right is recognized in international human rights law, including in article 25 (1) of the Universal

Declaration of Human Rights and in article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. It goes beyond the right to have a roof over one's head, to the right to a place to live in security, peace and dignity. This includes ensuring that everyone has security of tenure and protection from forced eviction. Housing must also be adequate and habitable, provide its inhabitants with the space and facilities necessary for health and security, protect them from cold, damp, heat, rain and wind, and not be built on or near polluted areas.[5] This right is operationalized by the 2030 Agenda; in target 11.1 of the Sustainable Development Goals, States commit to ensure, by 2030, access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services and upgrade slums.

12. Inclusive urbanization also depends on the realization of other economic and social rights enshrined in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, such as the rights to decent work, health and social security. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which monitors the implementation of the Covenant by State parties, provides authoritative interpretations of the Covenant's provisions that could guide the process of urbanization and the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and relevant Sustainable Development Goals. For example, the right to work and the right to just and favourable conditions of work would include ensuring adequate and equal pay for work of equal value without discrimination, safe and healthy working conditions, equal opportunities for promotion, in addition to the right to rest, leisure and a reasonable limitation on working hours.[6] These rights are also dependent on the realization of other rights, such as the right of everyone to social security including social insurance, the right to an adequate standard of living and the right of everyone to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.

13. These rights are reflected in many of the Sustainable Development Goals and are integral to the implementation of the New Urban Agenda. Goal 1 on ending poverty includes targets to implement social protection systems (target 1.3); and ensure that everyone has equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to basic services, ownership and control over land (target 1.4). Goal 8 recognizes the crucial link between decent work and combating inequality, deprivation and poverty and includes targets to achieve decent work for all women and men (target 8.5); take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour (target 8.7); and protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers (target 8.8).

14. Several Sustainable Development Goals address the health hazards caused by urbanization including air pollution, noise, high-density, inadequate and unsafe housing, and insufficient water supply and sewage disposal. They include targets to achieve, by 2030, universal health coverage, and to ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, affordable essential medicines and vaccines (targets 3.7 and 3.8). They also include targets to substantially reduce the number of deaths and illnesses from hazardous chemicals and air, water and soil pollution and contamination (target 3.9); and achieve universal access to safe and affordable drinking water, sanitation and hygiene (target 6.1 and 6.2).

15. In the New Urban Agenda, States commit themselves to promoting equitable and affordable access to sustainable basic physical and social infrastructure for all, including affordable housing, safe drinking water and sanitation, nutritious food, health care and family planning, education, culture and access to communications technologies. This must be read in conjunction with their commitment to fully respect the rights of refugees, migrants and internally displaced persons, regardless of their migration status. It remains pertinent where increasing urbanization has led to inequality, with people having to move away from city centres to areas that are poorly served by transport networks and services.

16. Inclusive urbanization depends on the free, active and meaningful participation of all inhabitants and the enjoyment of civil and political rights that help hold Governments

[5] See Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, general comment No. 4 (1991) on the right to adequate housing.

[6] See Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, general comment No. 18 (2005) on the right to work.

accountable. Too often, the most marginalized are unable to participate in political processes, and face restrictions and harassment in their everyday life, exacerbating their exclusion. Particularly important are the rights to freedom of assembly and expression, information, participation in decision-making processes, and vote. All of these rights are enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and reaffirmed in the 2030 Agenda and the New Urban Agenda.

17. Sustainable Development Goal 16 echoes much of the content of human rights standards regarding civil and political rights, and explicitly recognizes and reinforces the role these rights play in ensuring sustainable and inclusive development. This Goal includes targets to promote the rule of law and ensure equal access to justice for all (target 16.3); substantially reduce corruption (target 16.5); develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels (target 16.6); ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels, and public access to information (targets 16.7 and 16.10); and protect fundamental freedoms (target 16.10).

18. Similarly, in the New Urban Agenda, States commit themselves to the realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, facilitating living together, ending all forms of discrimination and violence, and empowering all individuals and communities while enabling their full and meaningful participation. They also recognize that the implementation of the Agenda must be based on the principles of equality, non-discrimination and accountability.

19. In the New Urban Agenda, States commit themselves to working towards an urban paradigm shift that recognizes the leading role of governments at all levels—national, subnational and local—in a transparent and accountable manner. Under international human rights law, human rights obligations extend to all levels of government, central and local authorities. This means that government authorities at all levels must exercise their authority in accordance with their human rights obligations. As local governments are the closest to community needs, they have a critical role and responsibilities in the implementation of human rights in cities, particularly economic and social rights (see A/HRC/28/62 and A/HRC/30/49).

20. Current trends towards decentralization have resulted in local and subnational governments having greater responsibilities. City administrations in particular are increasingly given additional powers, including greater fiscal autonomy, which, coupled with rapid urbanization and the emergence of megacities, are enhancing their importance as human rights actors. For instance, city administrations are often raising the revenue necessary to fulfil human rights in their own areas. In line with State obligations under international human rights law, local governments therefore have duties to ensure substantive equality of their population, including by investing in essential social services and redistributing income from the richest groups to those that are most marginalized (see E/2017/70, para. 43).

21. The increased responsibility given to local authorities and city administrations must also be accompanied by national Governments transferring the necessary financial and human resources, knowledge, capacity and accountability (see A/HRC/28/62). National Governments cannot delegate their human rights obligations by decentralizing responsibilities without providing the required support to the local authorities.

III. Human rights-based approaches in addressing urbanization challenges

A. Identifying those left behind

22. The commitment to leave no one behind in the New Urban Agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development requires the availability of quality and disaggregated data in order to identify who is excluded or discriminated against, and to develop appropriate measures to address their specific challenges. Data disaggregation is also essential for monitoring the progressive realization of economic, social and cultural rights.

Human rights indicators, which are based on international legal standards, are essential tools for measuring the realization of human rights and the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals at the national and local levels.

23. The nature of current urbanization processes in many countries, which are resulting in rapid, unplanned movement of people often living in extreme poverty, makes the challenges of data collection and disaggregation particularly complex. In many cases, people may not want to be identified as migrants living in an irregular situation, sexual minorities or stateless person. In Kenya, for instance, many of those who became displaced and homeless because of ethnic violence did not want to be identified as internally displaced persons for fear of reprisals.[7] A human rights-based approach to data, respecting key principles such as participation, self-identification, transparency, privacy and accountability, is therefore essential in data collection.[8]

24. Human rights organizations such as national human rights institutions play a pivotal role in identifying and monitoring who is unable to enjoy their human rights and is at risk of being left behind. For example, in Colombia, the Office of the Ombudsman found that 46 out of 1,097 municipalities were at high risk of facing health emergencies and a large part of the population was exposed to unacceptable levels of vulnerability in terms of access to and quality of the water supply.[9] In 2005, the Office of the Ombudsman in Peru issued a study highlighting the problems many sectors of the urban population had in accessing sanitation services and drinking water.[10] In Nigeria, the Nigerian Slum/Informal Settlement Federation helped gather data about the needs of the different communities, which should help with urban planning.[11]

25. While perhaps being the group that has been most left behind, reliable, accurate and comparable data on the number of homeless persons is scarce. Initiatives to count the number of homeless persons have often emerged organically from local communities or civil society organizations (see A/HRC/31/54, para. 67). Nonetheless, there are some examples of city administrations having taken direct action to monitor the situation of homelessness. Several Canadian cities such as Calgary, Edmonton, Ottawa and Vancouver have been conducting surveys to assess the number of street homeless persons (see A/HRC/31/31, para. 4).

26. An inclusive definition of the homeless is necessary to cover the full spectrum of homelessness and prevent further exclusion. While homelessness is frequently understood as people sleeping in the street, it also covers "hidden" situations, such as people living with extended family or friends, people living in temporary and unacceptable shelters, internally displaced persons and refugees and those facing other situations of social exclusion. Narrow definitions risk discriminating against those who may need assistance, such as people living in situations of vulnerability, for example those living in slums and/or facing forced eviction, thereby exacerbating inequality and exclusion. In addition to employing narrow definitions, some authorities also prioritize certain groups within the homeless community by identifying those who are perceived as being particularly vulnerable. While this could be seen as a logical response to situations where there are acute housing shortages, it ignores the fact that homeless persons are already incredibly

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[7] See Victoria Metcalfe and Sara Pavanello, with Prafulla Mishra, "Sanctuary in the city? Urban displacement and vulnerability in Nairobi", Humanitarian Policy Group Working Paper (London, Humanitarian Policy Group, 2011). Available at www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/7289.pdf.

[8] See Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), "A human rights-based approach to data: leaving no one behind in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development". Available at www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/HRIndicators/GuidanceNoteonApproachtoData.pdf.

[9] See Steven Jensen, Allison Corkery and Kate Donald "Realizing rights through the Sustainable Development Goals: the role of national human rights institutions", The Danish Institute for Human Rights and Center for Economic and Social Rights, 2015. Available at www.humanrights.dk/files/media/dokumenter/udgivelser/research/nhri_briefingpaper_may2015.pdf.

[10] Waterlex, "National human rights institutions and water governance: compilation of good practices", 2014, p. 20.

[11] For more information on this organization, see www.justempower.org/movement-building.

vulnerable and it could potentially result in a situation where many people in urgent need of assistance are left without any meaningful help. Any prioritization must therefore be done in accordance with human rights.

B. Guaranteeing access to adequate, safe and affordable housing for all

27. Under international human rights law, States have obligations to respect, protect and fulfil the right to adequate housing for all. Despite the fact that in target 11.1 of the Sustainable Development Goals, States have committed to ensuring access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing and basic services by 2030, in most developed and developing countries, particularly in cities, housing is becoming increasingly unaffordable for the general population. This is pushing people into inadequate housing and informal settlements where they face the threat of forced eviction because of insecure tenure, contributing to an increase in homelessness.

28. The supply of affordable housing has been considerably reduced by Governments decreasing their budgetary allocations to social housing since the 1980s, with a shift in their focus from that of a provider to that of a facilitator (see A/HRC/10/7, para. 27). The 2017 Housing Europe report on the state of housing in the European Union found that, with a few exceptions, providers of social housing have to "cope with less public funding and rely more on private finance".[12] It also found significant decreases in social housing production, observing for instance that in Italy, the production of social housing had halved between 2005 and 2014, from about 9,000 units per year to 4,600; in Spain, it had fallen from 15,000 in 2005 to 2,500 in 2014; and in Ireland it had decreased from 1,300 homes in 2005 to only 350 in 2014.[13]

29. To meet this short fall in social housing, many States use deregulation to promote the role of the private sector in providing housing. This has led to the weakening of rent protections, including with regard to short leases and rental costs. As areas become more gentrified, rent increases have often meant that established residents have been forced to move elsewhere.

30. Access to housing is also undermined by the financialization of housing as a commodity rather than a place to live in dignity. Global financial actors are investing large amounts of capital, betting on increasing prices to secure and accumulate wealth. This has increased the price of housing beyond the reach of many individuals. The prices "are no longer commensurate with household income levels, and instead are driven by demand for housing assets among global investors".[14]

31. To comply with international human rights law and meet the commitment in Sustainable Development Goal 11, States must ensure people's security of tenure and protect tenants against unreasonable rent levels or rent increases, in accordance with article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and general comment No. 4 (1991) on the right to adequate housing of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The Guiding Principles on Security of Tenure for the Urban Poor are also relevant (see A/HRC/25/54). States should also ensure that informal settlements are upgraded. Specific examples of this include Kosovo,[15] where in 2005, the Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning developed guidelines to assist municipalities to use spatial planning as a means of identifying and regularizing informal

[12] Housing Europe, "The state of housing in the EU 2017" (Brussels, Housing Europe, the European Federation of Public, Cooperative and Social Housing, 2017), p. 11.

[13] Ibid., p. 23.

[14] See the statement by the Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing during the interactive dialogue at the Human Rights Council, 1 March 2017. Available at www.ohchr.org/en/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=21264&LangID=E.

[15] All references to Kosovo in the present document should be understood to be in compliance with Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

settlements.[16] The guidelines and the Law on Spatial Planning establish that the regularization should include ensuring access to infrastructure and services, and guaranteeing property tenure.[17]

32. To help protect inhabitants from the financialization of housing, the province of British Columbia in Canada introduced a housing strategy in Vancouver that includes a tax on vacant housing, differential property tax on luxury residential housing, a "flipping" tax, a speculation tax, restrictions on property ownership by non-permanent residents and measures to recoup increased real estate values resulting from rezoning (see A/HRC/37/53, para. 87).[18]

33. In order to recognize the right to adequate housing of every citizen, many cities have started operating "Housing First" policies that move people from streets and shelters directly into housing with tenancy protections and provide access to support services, without them having to comply with certain conditions such as accepting treatment for addictions. Housing First is currently endorsed by numerous non-governmental organizations as a best practice for Governments and service agencies to use in their fight to end chronic homelessness.[19]

C. Ending poverty in cities through decent work

34. Protecting everyone's right to work and their rights at work is central to harnessing the potential of urbanization in eradicating poverty. However, many of those moving to urban areas are particularly vulnerable to discrimination, and therefore likely to be forced into working in hazardous and precarious conditions, largely in the informal economy, and for low wages that are not enough to lift them out of poverty.

35. Homeless persons, already considerably left behind, frequently experience direct and indirect discrimination in accessing decent work due to, among other factors, the lack of an address and official documentation, or the way they look. For many, the only possibilities are street vending or begging, which are often criminalized and stigmatized by both city administrations, national Governments and the general public, being perceived as infringing on space used for walking and driving. Street vendors are also often exposed to pollution, adverse weather conditions and violence.

36. Both national and local authorities must ensure access to decent work, which in turn helps prevent extreme exclusion and poverty, such as people becoming homeless. Many of the actions that need to be taken fall within the scope of spatial planning, such as more accessible public transport systems and buildings, and connecting slums and informal settlements with decent work opportunities. Other actions include better regulations to guarantee that a flexible labour market does not result in reduced protection of people's rights at work. Measures could also include tax incentives for urban companies and organizations that employ people from traditionally marginalized groups, women, persons with disabilities, migrants and those with a low socioeconomic status.

37. Current trends in deregulation are undermining access to decent work because they can lead to an increase in insecure or precarious contracts (see A/HRC/37/32, para. 46). Some Governments are also removing red tape around health and safety regulations, perceiving them as unfairly hindering business and restricting economic growth. Deregulation can also drive down wages in global supply chains. While low minimum wages can help to promote economic competitiveness, they also result in increasing poverty

[16] Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), "Assessment of municipal responses to informal settlements in Kosovo" (OSCE Mission in Kosovo, 2011), pp. 6–7.

[17] Ibid., p. 5.

[18] For more information, see http://bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/2018/highlights/2018_Highlights.pdf.

[19] One such non-governmental organization is the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness. See www.usich.gov/tools-for-action/housing-first-checklist.

if the wages are not sufficient to cover basic living costs, especially in cities where the cost of housing is increasing dramatically.[20]

38. The informal economy should also be taken into account in spatial planning. Cities become more inclusive when both formal and informal livelihoods are integrated into local economic and urban plans. For example, in India, the National Policy on Urban Street Vendors has been adopted, recognizing street vending as an integral part of the urban retail trade and distribution system. In exchange for a registration fee, street vendors are given legal status and access to a range of civic services such as provisions for solid waste disposal, public toilets, electricity, water, and storage facilities. To fully protect street vendors' rights, such policies must ensure that the registration system is accessible and affordable for all street vendors.[21] They must also ensure that the areas where vending is permitted are safe and offer an adequate livelihood. Several cities have also taken steps to improve working conditions in the informal economy. In Lima, the City Council has adopted a street vending ordinance that approves licences for a period of two years, promotes formalization and growth of the business of the vendor, and seeks to build vendors' capacities while also protecting their health.[22]

D. Eradicating hunger in cities

39. Ensuring access to nutritious food and the means with which people can feed themselves is a core element of the realization of the right to food. In urban areas, people predominantly rely on being able to purchase food, and those who live below the poverty line can spend up to 75 per cent of their income just on making sure they have enough food to eat.[23] They are therefore extremely vulnerable to price changes. Deregulation in commodity futures markets has resulted in speculation by international investors in food commodities, which has contributed to increasing food prices.[24] This was particularly so during 2007–2008, when there were sharp price fluctuations and hikes that had little to do with the actual supply of food.[25] Since then, various States and organizations, such as the European Union, have curbed financial betting on food contracts and increased the transparency of deals.[26] However civil society is concerned that these measures are not sufficient to protect the right to food.[27]

40. Moreover, many urban areas lack access to places where people can buy healthy food, fruit and vegetables at affordable prices. Large supermarket chains have low profit margins in these areas, and are often reluctant to incur expensive building costs, or are concerned about high crime rates. This leaves inhabitants who lack the financial means, transportation and time to access fresh, healthy food relying on fast food restaurants and calorie-laden packaged foods. Such people are more likely to be obese and spend a greater

[20] See David Cooper, "The minimum wage used to be enough to keep workers out of poverty—it's not anymore", Economic Policy Institute, 4 December 2013. Available at www.epi.org/publication/minimum-wage-workers-poverty-anymore-raising/.

[21] See Global Platform for the Right to the City, "what's the right to the city? inputs for the New Urban Agenda", p.17. Available at www.righttothecityplatform.org.br/download/publicacoes/what-R2C_digital-1.pdf.

[22] See Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing, "Focal Cities Lima". Available at www.wiego.org/wiego/focal-cities-lima.

[23] See Mark Tran, "EU curb on food speculation gets qualified welcome from activists", *Guardian*, 15 January 2014.

[24] See Ethical Consumer, "Banks betting on hunger", May 2013. Available at www.ethicalconsumer.org/ethicalreports/foodindustrysectorreport/foodspeculation.aspx.

[25] Ibid.

[26] See OXFAM International, "EU deal on curbing food speculation comes none too soon", 15 January 2014. Available at www.oxfam.org/en/pressroom/reactions/eu-deal-curbing-food-speculation-comes-none-too-soon.

[27] Ibid.

percentage of their time and income shopping for meals. While that phenomenon had been typically confined to developed countries, it is now becoming an issue in African cities.[28]

41. The content of the right to adequate food is particularly relevant when engaging in urban planning to tackle limited access to nutritious food. The right to adequate food is an inclusive right comprising a right to all the nutritional elements that a person needs to lead a healthy and active life, and the means to access them. Food must therefore be available, accessible and adequate. People must have access to food that satisfies their dietary needs, taking into account the individual's age, living conditions, health, occupation and sex, among other factors. In urban planning, consideration should be given to ensuring that farmers' markets or supermarkets or cultivable land are available in all areas of the city so that food deserts are eradicated.

E. Ensuring access to services, including water, sanitation and health

42. Although urbanization can help an increasing the number of people who have access to essential services, such as water, sanitation and health, how to provide those services in a safe, accessible, affordable, equitable and sustainable manner is a significant challenge. The complexity of the challenge is compounded by the surge in the urban population, inadequate infrastructure, austerity measures that have resulted in social spending cuts, and the privatization of water, sanitation and health services. Poor neighbourhoods and households may be excluded from service provision on the basis of their inability to pay.[29] Unplanned settlements often lack adequate water and sewage infrastructure.[30] Even if there is access to piped water, it may be a long walk away, the water source may function only some of the time, there may be long queues, and people may not be able afford to take the time off work to access such services.[31] For instance, people receiving informal water services often pay 5 to 10 times more than those connected to formal services.[32] Migrants and refugees, who are most likely to be living in informal settlements, are often denied access to health care because of their immigration status. Homeless persons also face a number of barriers to accessing services, especially water and sanitation. In addition, they may not be able to access health services due to the lack of an address and official documentation, and they may face stigmatization by public officials.

43. Lack of affordable access to services can result in extreme poverty. Health-care costs can lead to catastrophic expenditure that forces people into poverty. If left untreated, illness and injuries can also undermine people's ability to work and provide for their families. Moreover, those already living in more deprived urban areas are more likely to be exposed to health risks, such as overcrowded housing in hazardous locations, including flood-prone areas or toxic waste sites.

44. Some good examples of addressing these multiple challenges include the public health service of the city of Reggio Emilia in Italy, which provides outpatient care and medical treatment to foreigners, including migrants living in an irregular situation. Several other city administrations have also committed to providing services for undocumented migrants. In March 2012, the metropolitan government of Seoul announced that it would provide medical aid to migrants living in irregular situations who lacked access to social security and health insurance.[33]

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[28] See Jane Battersby and Jonathan Crush, "Africa's urban food deserts", *Urban Forum*, vol. 25, No. 2 (June 2014).

[29] See OHCHR, "Baseline study on the human rights impacts and implications of mega-infrastructure investment", 2017.

[30] See United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), *Cities and Children: The Challenge of Urbanisation in Tanzania* (Dar es Salaam, UNICEF Tanzania, 2012).

[31] Ibid.

[32] Catarina de Albuquerque, *On the Right Track: Good practices in realising the rights to water and sanitation* (Lisbon, 2012), p. 58.

[33] See Lee Woo-young, "Medical support set for undocumented migrants", *Korea Herald*, 7 March 2012.

45. In Bangladesh, non-governmental organizations have helped facilitate access to water and sanitation services for those living in informal settlements. According to the Special Rapporteur on the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation, local authorities in Dhaka were wary of installing services in informal settlements, as they believed it could indicate tacit acceptance of the settlements and give rise to more of them. One organization worked successfully with the local government and service provider to supply the inhabitants with legal connections, and its success reportedly led to a larger scale programme supported by a donor country (see A/HRC/18/33/Add.1, para. 45).

F. Achieving inclusiveness

46. Cities have great potential for enabling social mobilization for wider participation and influence in politics and policymaking, including for the marginalized and excluded.[34] The greater cultural diversity found in urban areas can deconstruct social norms and gender stereotypes and pave the way towards ensuring substantive equality and non-discrimination in the enjoyment of all human rights.

47. This positive potential of urbanization is frequently undermined by processes that lead to urban and spatial segregation, risking more poverty, jeopardizing security of tenure and creating more informal settlements. Particular challenges include affluent city dwellers separating themselves from other parts of cities and living in gated or enclosed neighbourhoods surrounded by private security systems. Such "hard spatial boundaries concentrate privilege and reinforce inequalities, fragmenting the city and undermining any sense of solidarity among urban dwellers".[35] They also remove many of the decision-makers from the real lives of many of their constituents.

48. The lack of affordable housing also undermined inclusiveness. As mentioned above, processes such as gentrification create segregated cities by pushing the poor out of city centres into the periphery, making it harder for them to access essential services and decent work. Furthermore, following the various economic and financial crises, where many States covered significant losses made in financial institutions, Governments introduced reductions in social security coverage and amounts, and increased sanctions for non-compliance with conditionalities. This resulted in people moving to poorer areas where decent employment opportunities are much scarcer.

49. Urban planning has a direct or indirect impact on the rights to freedom of expression, participation and civic engagement. While public spaces enable people to remain engaged and to stake a claim on the city, they are increasingly being privatized, restricted and monitored.[36] City authorities are also responding to terrorism threats with increasing militarization, especially in public areas, which can further undermine people's freedom of assembly and movement, especially those living in poverty and/or migrants and refugees who may be targeted for the way they look.

50. In some cases, urban planning deliberately redesigns public spaces in a way that restricts freedom of association. In addition to helping ensure well-being and health, public spaces give people the means of being able to meet and talk in large numbers and partake in collective cultural activities. However, these spaces are increasingly being privatized, thus "endangering rights to freedom of speech and freedom of assembly".[37] Such privatization limits the space in which human rights are practised.[38] Public spaces must be free of charge,

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[34] Habitat III Issue Papers: 1: inclusive cities, 2015, p. 2. Available at http://habitat3.org/wp-content/uploads/Habitat-III-Issue-Paper-1_Inclusive-Cities-2.0.pdf.

[35] See Sheridan Bartlett, Diana Mitlin and David Sattertwaite, "Urban inequities". Available at www.equityforchildren.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/sherry-Barlet-Urban-Inequalities.pdf.

[36] See Bradley L. Garrett, "The privatisation of cities' public spaces is escalating. It is time to take a stand", *Guardian*, 4 August 2015.

[37] See Gregory Smithsimon and Sharon Zukin, "The city's commons: privatization vs. human rights", in *The Future of Human Rights in an Urban World: exploring opportunities, threats and challenges*, Thijs van Lindert and Doukje Lettinga, eds.

[38] Ibid.

safe and free from physical, legal and architectural barriers, including those that discourage the presence of homeless and low income persons (preventive or dissuasive design) and make it difficult for the people with reduced mobility, in particular persons with disabilities and older persons, to move freely.[39]

51. Public transport systems can also further exacerbate exclusion. In unplanned urban settlements, there is often have no or limited access to public transport. Public transport services can also be indirectly discriminatory, for instance by failing to take into account the needs of certain communities, such as persons with disabilities or the security concerns of women, or the need to serve the poorer areas of the city.

52. There are good examples of initiatives by State authorities and civil society organizations at central and local levels that can help cities fulfil their potential for creating more inclusive societies. In Los Angeles in the United States, the Bus Riders Union, an organization of the transit-dependent immigrant working poor, successfully challenged the locational biases of the Metropolitan Transit Authority's plans for a fixed rail system, which would mainly serve the wealthy suburban population, and ignore the more pressing needs of the inner city working poor. The movement resulted in a 1996 court order demanding that the Metropolitan Transit Authority give first budget priority to the purchase of new buses, reduction of bus stop crime, and improvements in bus routing and waiting times.[40]

G. Participatory and accountable governance

53. Sustainable urbanization requires effective and meaningful participation of people as rights holders, especially those in situations of vulnerability, at every stage of the decision-making processes that affects their lives. Too often, the voices of the poor, people living in slums and informal settlements, women, children, minorities, indigenous peoples, migrants, persons with disabilities, refugees, older persons and others are not heard in urban development processes, resulting in development that further marginalizes and discriminates those most in need. Homeless persons are at particular risk of being excluded from political processes. The Special Rapporteur on adequate housing has highlighted how the homeless are rendered voiceless and invisible, banished to the peripheries of cities and towns, out of sight (see A/HRC/31/54, para. 88). Difficulties in accessing justice due to discrimination and stigmatization, lack of money to pay lawyers' fees and a lack of education and/or knowledge about the law further exacerbate their exclusion.

54. National Governments and city administrations must guarantee that all city inhabitants have access to judicial and non-judicial processes and mechanisms that hold States accountable for their obligations to realize human rights, including economic, social and cultural rights. Numerous States have ensured the justiciability of economic and social rights. In France, the right to housing is a recognized social right, enshrined in the preamble of the 1946 Constitution, and reaffirmed and strengthened by a series of laws including the 2008 Law on the Right to Enforceable Housing, which obliges the State to provide housing solutions for the most vulnerable. The Constitution of South Africa contains a range of economic, social and cultural rights, and guarantees their justiciability in a court of law. This is also applied at the city level. For instance, in November 2012, the province of Buenos Aires adopted a law on fair access to habitat, which guarantees the right to housing and to a dignified and sustainable habitat (see A/HRC/28/62, para. 62).

55. There are also numerous examples of organizations providing legal aid to the urban poor, including the homeless, to help them claim their rights. While the actions of such organizations are vital, this does not erode the obligations of States. States are specifically

[39] See "Barcelona Declaration for Habitat III: Public Spaces, Barcelona, 4–5 April 2016. Available at http://habitat3.org/wp-content/uploads/BARCELONA-DECLARATION.pdf.

[40] See Edward W Soja, "The city and spatial justice", *spatial justice*, Issue 1 (September 2009). Available at www.jssj.org/article/la-ville-et-la-justice-spatiale/.

obligated to ensure access to justice, and this should include providing legal aid for those living in poverty.

56. Other accountability mechanisms include national human rights institutions and ombudspersons at both State and city levels that can assess whether or not human rights obligations have been met, monitor the implementation of policies and programmes, and provide avenues for redress, complementing the formal justice system. Examples of city level human rights commissions include Montreal, which has established an ombudsman and human rights training for city government staff. In the city of Gwangju in the Republic of Korea, following the adoption of the Human Rights Ordinance in 2009, local authorities created the Human Rights Office and developed a full-scale municipal human rights action plan accompanied by a set of 100 human rights indicators.

57. There are also many examples of states and city administrations improving the effective and meaningful participation of all city inhabitants in urban governance in recognition of target 11.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals, in which States committed to enhance inclusive and sustainable urbanization and capacity for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries. Article 184.1 of the Constitution of Kenya states that "national legislation shall provide for the governance and management of urban areas and cities and shall, in particular ... provide for participation by residents in the governance of urban areas and cities". Several local and national authorities are also introducing participatory budgeting. In Brazil, municipal governments can voluntarily adopt a programme known as "participatory budgeting", which allows citizens to decide how to allocate public funds. The municipalities that have adopted participatory budgeting have spent more on education and sanitation and have witnessed a visible decrease in infant mortality.[41] To be fully participatory, such schemes should involve all city inhabitants, regardless of their immigration status, to make sure that the most marginalized and vulnerable are included, especially the homeless and those living in unacceptable conditions. There must also be clear transparency and access to information for all.

H. Environmental sustainability

58. Protecting environmental sustainability is a key element of ensuring inclusive and sustainable development. The 2030 Agenda commits States to increasing the resilience of societies and ecosystems to hazards, shocks and stresses and to reduce the risks and vulnerabilities of the most marginalized people.

59. Given their high concentration of people and infrastructure, cities are particularly affected by disasters and climate change. According to the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), globally, 80 per cent of the largest cities are vulnerable to severe impacts from earthquakes, 60 per cent are at risk from storm surges and tsunamis, and all face new impacts caused by climate change such as the health impact of rising temperatures. Persons living in poverty are especially affected since they are more likely to be living in hazardous buildings. They are also more likely to work outside in exposed and hazardous conditions, and often have only limited access to information and the resources necessary to adapt.

60. A human rights-based approach is key to increasing the resilience of urban societies, economies and the environment to withstand shocks, embrace uncertainty and manage risks. Such an approach is based on the indivisibility and interdependence of all human rights and includes putting people at the centre, addressing the root causes of vulnerabilities and ensuring accountability and access to remedies (see A/HRC/37/30, paras. 39–49). Human rights bodies have underscored that States have duties to protect citizens against foreseeable environmental impairment of human rights, whether or not the States directly cause the harm. An example is a case that was considered by the European Court of Human

[41] See Brian Wampler and Mike Touchton, "Brazil let its citizens make decisions about city budgets. Here's what happened", *Washington Post*, 22 January 2014.

Rights regarding a mudslide in the Caucasus that killed several inhabitants of the town of Tyrnauz.[42] Although the Government did not cause the mudslide, the Court held that it still had a responsibility to take appropriate preventative measures to safeguard the lives of those within its jurisdiction.

61. Ensuring environmental sustainability intersects with many of the issues raised in the present report, such as ensuring participation in urban governance and access to information, available safe housing that can prevent people having to live on flood plains for instance; and decent working conditions. Civil society can play a key role in promoting the participation of affected communities. For instance, together with local partner organizations, the Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development helps urban poor communities in the region document their own experiences of climate change and advocate for them to be taken into account. After conducting its own research, a community in the Philippines passed a resolution to prevent the use of destructive fishing practices and now requires individuals to adhere to strict fishing and hunting schedules (see A/HRC/28/61, para. 94).

IV. Conclusion and recommendations

62. **Human rights are key to ensuring urbanization that is sustainable and socially inclusive, promotes equality, combats discrimination in all its forms and empowers individuals and communities. At the same time, urbanization offers largely untapped potential for the protection and promotion of human rights for all city inhabitants, by making cities places of equal opportunity, where all can live in security, peace and dignity.**

63. **The Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda both require that no one be left behind. The most visible manifestation of those being left behind is the growing number of people living in unacceptable conditions, including being homeless.**

64. **Therefore, it is important to build coherence and synergies between human rights, the Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda in order to strengthen human rights and sustainable urbanization worldwide. The human rights-based implementation and monitoring of the two Agendas include:**

(a) **Ensuring that national and local legislation, policies and programmes recognize and ensure the justiciability in courts of all human rights, including economic, social and cultural rights;**

(b) **Recognizing that housing and land are not mere commodities; and guaranteeing security of tenure for all and the social function of housing, land and property in law and policies;**

(c) **Ensuring that urban and spatial planning respects, protects and fulfils human rights. Professionals should be aware of human rights standards and principles, and work closely with civil society;**

(d) **Addressing homelessness and forced evictions with a cross-sectoral human rights based strategy. This must include tackling their structural causes, including the commodification and financialization of housing. In this regard, States should consider the recommendations provided by the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing;**

(e) **Ensuring free, active and meaningful participation of all, particularly the most marginalized, in all urban policies and programmes, including spatial planning and budgeting. This requires involving inhabitants in the early stages of the**

[42] See European Court of Human Rights, *Budayeva and others v. Russia*, application No. 15339/02 (2008).

processes and upholding fundamental rights and freedoms, in particular the rights to freedom of speech and assembly, to information and to vote;

(f) Strengthening the accountability of authorities for respecting, protecting and promoting the human rights of all city dwellers. This includes clearly articulating the responsibilities of national and local governments to ensure the realization of human rights, and providing them with the necessary resources;

(g) Ending laws and policies that can result in criminalizing people living in poverty, including those living in informal settlements and homeless persons;

(h) Guaranteeing access to all services, including water and sanitation, for all urban inhabitants, including those who are homeless or living in informal settlements;

(i) Ensuring that urban financing models are grounded in human rights. They must be: (i) the product of transparent and participatory processes, to ensure that they benefit the poorest and most marginalized; and (ii) equal and non-discriminatory, with financial service access being guaranteed for all people, across income, gender, geography, age and other considerations.